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Acton Historic District Commission
Meeting November 9, 2010
Minutes

TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Meeting was opened at 7:31. Present were Scott Kutil (SK), Kathy Acerbo-Bachman (KAB), David Honn (DH), Michaela Moran (MM), David Barrat (DB) and Mike Gowing (MG), BoS liaison.

There were no citizen's concerns.

At the next meeting it is anticipated that the Commission will approve all of the back minutes by consent. Tara Fredrichs reports that the scanning of HDC files is going well. Digitizing of all of the HDC documents and files will provide more space for new items.

Task Review: DB will speak with Brian in the Assessor's office for book and page references for all addresses in each of the historic districts. The information will be provided to the register of deeds in Cambridge, MA for marginal referencing. Reference will be made back to the town's recorded documents establishing the three historic districts. This will provide notice to new owners that the listed property is in the one of the historic districts.

We will schedule a workshop in the spring with Chris Skelly to explore the economic benefits of historic preservation, demolition by neglect and establishment of minimum maintenance. The date will be April 11, 2011.

7:40 Asa Parlin Homestead: MM stated that henceforth the property at 10 Woodbury Lane will be referred to as the Asa Parlin Homestead rather than the Vaillancourt house. She presented a phased plan for restoration of the subject property to the Board of Selectmen for prioritization for CPC funding. She was asked if there was any other funding available in addition to what is being sought from CPC. She noted that the architects working with the Historic Commission had put in substantial time and had consumed most, if not all, of their budget preparing an application for another grant. Our budget is not sufficient to cover the costs.

KAB Re-branding the property as the Asa Parlin Homestead must include reminding all concerned that this property is included in the National Registry District. Outreach for support could include finding resources for gardening around the property. This could be an educational project for students. Perhaps the Acton Garden Club would be interested in participating. Landscaping should be considered for funding along with renovations. We could ask Celia Kent an avid gardener for assistance.

MG Had two things to say; MM did a fabulous job with the Asa Parlin presentation. The top CPC priorities are: \$500k for open space projects and second was the Asa Parlin homestead. It was a great team effort.

DH Garden would be educational for students under Garden Club tutelage.

KAB SK 18 Wright Road Sample roofing Timberline shingles. House is at the end of street at the top of the hill. The light color of shingles should be replaced with light color. Trim to be painted white to match the white drip edge. The house has a hipped roof with no gables.

SK Motion to approve application #1041 using 30 year Timberline JF30 Architectural shingles; drip edge to be white to match trim, Approval is pending abutter notification.

RR Nice to include photos of house itself for discussion. He proposed two changes to applications to include Parcel # and photo. We should change the form to include this.

Voted to approve the motion unanimously.

DH proposed that the form be changed by adding a line for assessor to provide map and parcel # and photos.

MM to change form and send to KAB.

KAB Steve LeDoux to bring forward application on Asa Parlin.

57 Robbins Street. Memo development is on our list for comment concerning demolition of a barn on the property at 57 Robbins Street. This is a cultural resource. Do we write a memorandum? It would be worth it. Would be advisory in nature. The public record should show concern for cultural needs. These assets need deeper protection. This letter probably won't make a difference.

MM It would behoove us to point out that culture is destroyed as is the town's character. If we say nothing our silence denotes complicity. SK Is the barn sound?

DH Neighbor stated the barn board is in good shape. It is a bad precedent to destroy cultural resource. Perhaps we should write a letter to the Beacon. The Public Hearing on the 16th.

Each of us can appear and speak in favor of preserving the barn as individuals.

There is room on both sides of the barn for a twelve-foot drive that could pass on the other side of the house. It is being demolished for increased profits. Make more money to raze buildings. The deciding body is the Planning Board this not in our jurisdiction.

DH The developers are asking for ton of waivers. Oppose granting waivers. Allow for an alternative.

KAB There are three options, memo to the planning board to oppose and give reasons. 1. Cultural resources limited. Can vote to speak at the Planning Board as individual citizens. Draft for tomorrow or day after. RR at the Planning Board public hearing. Our letter will be in the Packet for meeting at 12/16/at 7PM in room 204.

RR Demolition of buildings diminishes the whole subdivision. This barn would help hide the subdivision. Twelve foot wide driveway is an option on the other side; 32' is another option. Better solution, have right of way granted to help maintain character of Acton.

KAB Motion to approve as memo; MM seconded along with oral presentation. Passed unanimously.

DH Add that Action 20/20's stated preference for rural character is completely antithetical to destruction of barns.

MBTA: Approval of changes by DH and RR. Were aided by Chris Dalmus at SATSAC meeting at 8PM. DH presented design ideas. The MBTA (T) agreed with a few points also less glass and bigger doorways. Balked with anything further. They would like a letter from HDC to MHC that we are satisfied with progress. What should the letter say to meet T's needs. We need more details for letter to MHC. The letter should repeat appreciation for the change to a dual platform Third, show preference for architectural plans for changes, larger openings, and less glass. HDC proposed central to roof unify design. It is truly compatible with district's roof-like canopies. Thank the T for meeting. Express desire to help however we can.

Talk to MHC? No. If we say we are satisfied with T's progress, T will present it to FTA which takes away our clout to leverage change.

KAB We need to set out points of agreement and disagreement. What are the consequences if we write a letter. The skin of the building Track and basic structure would continue to need more details. The design work is at a very early stage.

RR Beyond early stage. Roof lines wrapping is not merely cosmetic. Wrapper is at early stage. Refer to layout.

DH. Refer to same plan as last night . Two buildings connected by bridge, a sliver of a structure. 1.) Proper elevator and stair access, propose increase in canopy. 2.) Redesign the roof plan.

KAB What is the conclusions? SK No questions; wasn't there. Has no argument. The T wants letter to say we trust and agree with all of it. We want more of canopy per H.H.Richardson.

MG The woods create a problem on the south side.

DH No, pay a structural engineer to redesign the structure. Some work has unevenly progressed and is way ahead.

MG Take right of way Rail-trail funds and put them toward the cost of the station. Roland is working on this funding aspect. Get rid of pedestrian bridge. Would make flow work easier.

MM Assabet River Rail Trail might be a source of funds.

DH To draft memo. KAB to edit guided by MHC conversation.

RR Anticipate writing the letter pending resolution of the sensitivity of the station with the surrounding area. Station character should be more of an pleasant amenity and not a detraction. HDC is working with architectural designs that are cost effective and flexible.

Wrapper is made up of expensive materials which can't be dismissed by preconceived notions.

9PM Exchange Hall Glenn Berger: Discussion. MM recused herself because of involvement with Ironworks Farm. DH can stay per BoS.

MM All people at Ironworks Farm will make comments on Exchange Hall.

Original application to CPC included plans to demolish the two separate buildings associated with Exchange Hall. GB now intends to keep both. Exchange Hall needs snow guards.

GB CPC Cooperative, listened but was skeptical. The E. H. building is finished on the outside. The other two buildings are ongoing. We need to keep the permit open to continue with the planed work on the other two. Snow falling off the roof is an issue. GB plans to use of a snow barrier product. HDC initial permit process had anticipated taking down of 127 and 131 School Street. One to to be taken down for parking. The goal agreed upon with Mill Corner was for 24-25 parking spaces and taking down building. Site plan Specifications included a Perm. approved for restaurant. Went after Mill Corner folks. Sued and lost. CPC was approached with plan to restore the building and lease it. The plan for a lot for parking is on hold. Save 127 School Street and restore 131 School Street for apartments. Move shop out make office space. SK Don't close permits. Note; this should be an application to amend to the application for snow guards regarding 127-131.

DH A letter has to be written that the E.H. renovations meet Secretary of Interior-standards. These are available on line. GB needs to catagorize rehab renovations, agree on want was done. They are somewhere in between.

KAB There are other projects in SAHD. We are working out system with Roland. The owners/contractors need to start approval with HDC. Roland is working out how to do that. Funding for the whole exterior. Submit certification for MHC. Sent photos to Chris Beard. Sent to MHC. Plans indexed to photos need closing out from MHC.

Snow Guards: Refer to two architectural plans on how to keep snow off.

Two kinds; fill little tabs between two slates, one is decent system. The slate was used on the building around 1900 over wood. Bracket is put in every couple of slates.

The available metals are brass and copper and have three bars.

KAB The make and model is Seger Snow Guards We need to send notice to the abutters.

RR Tabs are too much destruction of slates. 10 foot Spreads at as you go up further. Difficult to retrofit every 28'.

RR every thing is copper. DH It will develop a patina. SK wants to look around at other examples of snow guards.

KAB We have two public hearings on the 23rd. 9PM is the slot that is open. Do this as an amendment to the original application.

KAB Need specifics ideas or plans for 127 and 131.

131 is on permit. 127 had historical detail taken off. He will come back on 11/23.

We will process amendments and use template for approval.


Next meeting will have Aaron Goff to inform him of the need to pain his chimney and to discuss his plan for shingling his roof and 18 Windsor Avenue swinging door issue.

We need to each look at 33 Windsor Avenue to se if changes made without application are visible and thus in our jurisdiction. MM wants them to submit a permit.

DH We should send a letter to FR and Mark to have applicant for permits in the historic districts to send us applications before granting permits. Homeowners should be alerted advising they are in the historic district and must apply for approvals. This would prevent cheating.

Meeting adjourned 9:55

Respectfully submitted


David Barrat,
Secretary